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MADGE HALES
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MADGE HALES

A Narrative of Fish

(Siamese Fighters)

NOW in their trance, their water weave
Of slow approaches unapparent
To a surface eye, but destined as dawn
To follow the intricate impulse

Of bubble blowing to build a nest,
To float a bunch of minute grapes
From pouting lips, globe his dream
That sons swim in his exotic seas . . .

Almost of stealth their coloured burgeoning,
Day shoulders dark and sun emerges new
With the waiting of their chilly pulse
Only death could undeliver.

Near-static eyes focus on one centre,
One peak pinks and plumps her gill
His rainbow attitudes of floating fin
A dance electric in its veils.

Till time he takes her; wraps round
Her side his violent fin and holds;
No longer waving cloud-entranced,
But taut, bending her need to his own

A lifetime long, until in single syllables
The fragile eggs escaping float,
And dropping her, curved in his attitude,
He agile mouthed catches and blows each egg

Into the bubbling nest. Then seeks her still
In the wrapped gesture countless times;
Till thin of progeny he spurns her
For Father vigilance of their clammy offspring.

Then turns their dance to death. A male
Consuming venom guides his bronze-blunt head
That nothing remain of lover shame,
Follows the final impulse to its end.

LAWRENCE LIPTON

Libation to the Lesser Gods

WHAT wizard god this side of madness made
From what spent sun, exploding star or drift
Of space-wide wandering dust, this blood and brain
To what far reckoning in time that I
In tie and shirt-tail, shaved and shod,
A clown in mufti or a priest in cap and bells,
Should seek to conjure water from a stone
Sans wreathing serpent or a flowering rod?

Should seek in this black sabbath of the heart
Among the cerements of the unrisen sun
The undivided garment of anointed love,
More white than damask on white damask laid,
In fire and water cleansed of all impure
Investiture of evil, find once more
Encaved in darkness like a foetal sleep
The unembittered sabbath of the poor.

And close the book and go some little while
With laughter and the lesser gods, to taste
The fear and rapture of the first and last,
Heights and depths, the ecstasy of all excess,
Some little while the pulse with quickened beat
And breathless at the crest of motion blown,
Dance-drunken as a windblown flame, and hear
The flash and thunder of their passing feet.

U.S.A.

W. H. PETTY

Garda

OVER the heats lounging around the lake,
Beyond the town's white angularities
And the morning tables bright as tight fruit
Teem the thick hills of olive and the vines
And the plump villas staring with sunlight.

The eyes throb in the hot grouping colours
And the mind moves to lazy draughtsmanship
With the neat edges of the boat-still water,
The hands of cypresses raised in lecture
And the sprawling weights of Monte Baldo.

URSULA STUART LAIRD

The Increased Light

WHO and what are you? ask the angry men.

Painters that cannot catch the swirl of rain,
poets whose paper words are tissue ghosts,
sages and fools that only meet at meals.

Out of the wind's breath whittled to
the earth-bound roots of trees;
out of the sea-wrack's feathered kiss
there comes a child
who has no name.

Out of the oiled warmth beneath the
energy of wings,
out of the white-land's whiter shade
there comes a child
who has no name.

Out of the mind's wreath petalled with
the subtlety of words,
out of the finger's fickle touch
there comes a child
who has no name.

I am what the world sees and knows not,
I am what the world knows and sees not.
The candle flame that went out long ago;
the coiled leaf-vein waiting under ice,
and summer's eyelash curled within the earth.

KENDRICK SMITHYMAN

A Small Piece in form of Prayer

THAT night the clouds broke cover, ranging
Not regularly a wind before but heaving over
The traces and hounding the rains, I took
For lover one of the estranging
Stars from the cold unclosed
In her momentarily bitter course and wantonly shook
Her down to my wanting side
Where, blazing personal in that hurling dark,
She continues to preside.

Memorial faggots of dust, uneat your god
Sacramentally from the small fires in the night
And pray in my suffering dust in the witless clod
Be set the merits of her encumbering light.

New Zealand

CHRISTOPHER LEVENSON

Autobahn

BETWEEN twilight and dawn there is only the road,
Unwinding its endless darkness before the wheels.
Steadily the dials reiterate, the diesels drone
Formulas of power and speed as unwieldy loads in convoy
Blaze their trail of sound
Across viaducts, forests, over quiet valleys;
From all horizons headlamps cut like diamonds
Through space caught in parenthesis, time noticed in passing.

At concrete islands of light, tankstelles
Stranded like stars in the cold and empty distance,
Wagons are drawn up waiting as their crews swig warmth
And savour company to its last dregs of speech.
Conversation begins, is broken off, a random sleep
Slumps into blurred awareness, tired limbs still
Are drugged by desire to travel. Continually rear-lamps pass,
Dwindle and die like a snuffed cigarette.

Exiled ambassadors of their hearts' country, refugees
Carry the future in one attache case.
Here—a forced stop—they shiver and pace the neon.
New life seems spread out before them like a map,
But as coffee spills so do their courses wander,
And now in a halfway world between two evils
This is reality; the rumoured land
For which they fled becomes merely rest in transit
Where each affirms again or must abandon
The pilgrimage to find hope, ever beyond them,
The mirage over the hills, gained only by travelling
Through darkness endlessly and so into dawn.

W. PRICE TURNER

The Angry Gambler

WALK away rage in the rain
where fury and sorrow fuse
to drive out pride's excesses
and lay the ghost of pain,
till peace that joy renews
is all the heart confesses.

Gamble your trust on the time
when hunger and love must meet,
when faith, intent on winning,
or confident as rhyme
considering no defeat,
confirms a new beginning.

The angry gambler reconciles
in man and truth, extremes;
he paralyses compromise
as fear is slain by smiles,
all he contrives to improvise
multiplies *is by seems*,
integrity lives in his eyes,
luck winks in all his dreams.

THOMAS BLACKBURN

No Single Station

NO single station of the globe
Can rest the vagrant feet of love,
Whose true vocation must exceed
All pastures where her children feed.
Transcending in one breathless act
The possibilities of fact,
We learn no creature will confine
Love's nature in its curving line.
And thus within our nuptial play
The blinding cloths are torn away,
Revealing to our sensual night
The reaches of an inward sight,
Until our disillusion bless
That vision born of nakedness.

ALEC CRAIG

Salvation

O jungle rose whose heart I eat
O burning tiger to my spear
I track you through the forest heat
I hunt you round the tropic year

The zenith sun can scarcely light
The marshy maze our lusts pursue
That wanders down an opal night
With never a glimpse of heaven's blue

What gentle stag whose antlers
Enshrines the passion's fearless death
Shall leave the north and seek for me
To bar my path with smoking breath?

Yet resurrection we must gain
Or else the cosmic axle tree
Would crack beneath its load of pain
With no support from you or me

His need and ours we will enmesh
Until integrity atones
The day you cleave to wasting flesh
And bundle in my arms your bones

Note : The middle stanza alludes to the legends of St. Eustace and St. Hubert.

MAURICE COLE

April

NOW the stern sun like an ironmaster casts
Us with spring again, our metals and ores,
Ours and April's; mixed by the stirring masts
Of trees where the new light of furnace pours,
Pulsing our ears as the old alloy forms
And the blast of creation roars and runs
Molten to moulds, birds, grass, flowers, us and worms
In fountains! rivulets! vertical suns!

And this annual moulding with hot device
Of us and nature, slowly tempts out yet
Finer metals? Once, iron and bronze did suffice
The immediate stress, then steel was set
Free, then the uncorrodable alloy—
Still that frenzied yet capable master
Mixes on in metallurgical joy
For the perfect mixture, faster and faster . . .

And yearly we burn, splutter and harden,
Dream-casts of spring, Eden and its Garden.

MARGARET RHODES

Palms

ACROSS the road two palm trees stand,
Not like the furred giants of Bordighera—with crests
among the stars
Or in sunlight unfurling umbrellas of shade over a
molten land—

But tatterdemalion, poor-relation palms
Teased by our northern gales, lopped by last winter's frost
Piecemeal, past hope, failure's familiars.
Yet on a windy night
When the moon rocks with the old moon in her arms,
Down the road rustles the rattle of leaves
Light as shells stirred upon shingle by the tide
Or wainscot-scuttering of starlings in the eaves . . .
And I, O I am lost
Far beyond living landmarks of time and space.

This wind roisters across Cadiz; some other I
Knew once, deep in the bone and so forever,
That sea-borne city's darkness, nightlong knew
The palm-fronds' grasshopper frenzy of castanets
Under a starless sky.

There was a sound too of distant drums
And suddenly altar-shining in the light
Of myriad candles—see, see where comes
The paso, step by muffled step, swaying above
floating faces
And nightmare hoods of penitents, torch in hand :
Where Roman soldiers ride
Behind the Calvary, and the saeta arrow of song
wings down
Wringing, rinsing the heart, plumbing all grief.

There are places
Mirage-fading, known in a dream and forgotten on waking,
And others whose bland
And shuttered countenance like the face of a lover
Turns with a Mona Lisa smile, seeking
A sign, promising passion and peace and belief.
Almost one forgets

Until a wind clatters two workaday palms
In a bird-brittle morse-message on a moon's night
And clear as the scenes of childhood to a crone's view
Are the sea and the sky cradling Cadiz in their arms.

ROBERT BELOOF

No

is the brass tacks
that puts the administrator in his place,
the hardest word for the healthy to say and mean;
it is nonetheless conclusive and leaves
the victim free to die.

The all-No is seldom as the all-Yes;
no means mostly maybe:
"We cannot, Mr. Bangs, in this instance
give a human response.
We would be pleased, however,
if you would remain usefully breathing."

A disease of filth, part-no devours
anaemic part-yes;
is what enables us to participate
as if both parties were dead
though not uncomfortably stiff like corpses.

No is the simplifier;
"Thou shalt not commit adultery" means
a lot of women will not lie in your arms:
it will stand back of you solid as a wall,
never desert, until they pull the trigger.

Yes the complexifier
will accept, spread, sustain and exalt you
till they thrust the spear in.
"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" means you never
can tell what in hell will happen next.

Neither, we all know, is often possible.

U.S.A.

J. PHOENICE

On a Lionel Edwards Print

POISED in perpetual motion, in full cry,
A scarlet god astride the winter day,
The lilac cloudbank and the wide green sky
Mirrored by fen and water, green and grey.
Light, space, speed, a glory—a whole range
Of experience caught and held forever more,
Like a world fixed in a love that does not change
To delight in as before.

PETER APPLETON

Nocturne

(for Helen)

THIS is the hour when deafening silence
Rears to the perpendicular
And all the questions come we dare not answer;
When doubt a padding tiger prowls
The guilt-sown jungle of the mind
And conscience is a cornered beast that cries,
While faith itself, a stricken animal,
Denies denies denies.

The hour when old disastrous roads
Are travelled over again and turnings
Then not taken now in dream are followed to
might-have-beens.

The future shouts with trumpets and with flags;
The long desires are granted; yet we know
It will not be so; even as we invent
The golden years, a hundred nameless fears
Surprise our argument.

Now we are far from where we are;
Dust of an earlier world, we sink
Sink into blackness, chaos, rout.
The sky heels over, moon and stars are drowned

And the ages fall apart.
God is not yet born. We are flesh, blood
And bone that is not Man beneath a sun
That hammers fire on a bare earth coughing fire,
And we are dead before we have begun,
Inheriting the worm and its desire.

TERENCE HEYWOOD

Southdown Silvics

FOR the vermilionth time the hearty sun
comes up behind the ridges, ticking off
spruce accents. Robins look no redder in
the snow, foraging vainly. Greyer now,
the sheep are other clumps of clematis—
and old-man's-beard continues late this winter,
guardian in thicket of the bracken-leaves
that ruddier glow today. Beech saplings too
are bronze worth gold, their frost-fixt winter-shift
keeping soil's hue above the snow's debasement.
Some dogwood earths the sun in bunchiness
who bouncing would be too aloof without
such bounty. Around trunk of ash and oak
voles hunt: their frond-spoons tentatively spread
out of the moss-and-lichen litter. Now
a pheasant ponders weight, feels panicky—
as light in head as body, although thirst
(crystals undrinkable) is graver, more
acute, accentual of lack. Loud noughts
bulge from this boss in chain-reaction, bead
on bead glass-blown by sun (what craftsmanship!)
in snowflake combine,—every flake itself,
an individual, distinct, unlike
that one or that one, merging among others
to form new shapes unique, incomparable . . .
With spittle-hardened hands the woodman mates
axe and the bole he deftly amputates:
cranesbill records those drops the sun relates.

MARGARET HALEY CARPENTER

At an Art Gallery

THEN, finally, they paused before a scene
Of loneliness, so beautiful, so calm,
Her heart was flooded with its lyric spell :

Water, whose lambent glass imprisoned stars
And held the evening's image in its depths;
While from the darkness rose an ancient oak
That knelt with patience on its twisted limbs,
And quietly prayed there in the brooding dusk.

"See how the shadows all around the trees
Establish form and colour tone," he said.
"Shadows lend strength and make the texture true."

She only smiled in silence, but her mind
Stumbled back across the long and desolate years
Back to the ultimate question, waiting still.

How strange, she thought, to find the answer here :
Wisdom inscribed in lavender and blue.
Shadows lend strength and make the texture true.

For this, the certain darkness and defeat :
That the essential spirit should endure,
Its clarity sustained because of loss,
By suffering made radiant and pure.

Reluctantly, at last, they turned away . . .
And as they passed into the soundless night,
She heard a sudden chiming of cool stars
Blown down through space,—and looking up, perceived
How gold they gleamed against the wintry sky—
Against the dark, how luminous their light !

U.S.A.

REVIEWS

Something of the Sea : Alan Ross (Derek Verschoyle, 6s 0d.).

Three Poems for Now : Gordden Link (University Press of Washington, \$1.75).

Peter's Progress : Geoffrey Parsons (Hand & Flower Press, 3s. 6d.).

FOR a book which assembles all that its author wishes to preserve of ten years' work, *Something of the Sea* is disappointing. The first section alone, entitled *War*, and written directly from naval experience, retains immediacy and point. Mr. Ross is impressive in evocation of local atmosphere, and in poems such as *Mess-deck* conveys not only the externals but the moods of the sailors :

"We reach for sleep like a gas, randy for oblivion . . ."

or

"And lie stiffly, running off films in the mind's dark-room"

Elsewhere in the book, *Post-War* and *En Route*, he is content to depict laconically guide-book decor with no apparent compulsion and mainly by means of evocative associations, as in :

"*Tartarin de Tarascon* in all the bookshops,
Prints by Van Gogh, provençal cottons and garlic.
And Daudet strings it together, fetching
Back the past as easily as his donkey,"

Even images like "the afternoon like dead skin" and "At night the front like coloured barley-sugar" are wasted because the poems have no movement, are merely a collection of disjointed comments whose clinical detachment not only anaesthetizes but sterilizes the subject. This blasé objectivity, relegating statement to asides, implies rather than depicts. The reader may judge whether topography finds its best medium here, and whether the landscapes poetically snapshot are sufficient *raisons d'être* for the poems. *Zoo* is a notable exception, having both unity and purpose, whilst *North London* and *Boats on the Round Pond* show Ross's descriptive technique to its best advantage—crisp and full of wry, significant detail. *1950, a biographical fragment*, the poem that concludes the book, is often amusing, colloquial and vivid, but again with no sense of direction.

Three Poems for Now are as pretentiously pseudo-epic as their title suggests, a mixture of donnish cliché and neo-Audenesque incantation. The blurb tells us this is "the first book by an

American poet to be dedicated exclusively to the implications of the Atomic Age." The second poem is subsectioned *Final Curtain, Now at the Edge of Oblivion, Memories of Harvard at Midcentury, and Apocalypse*.

Peter's Progress is a pleasant but far too rambling satiric case-history, its sporadic barbs aimed mainly at Public Schools, English sex-life, and salon poetry. Mr. Parsons has the authentic Byronic touch (as well as the *Don Juan* stanza form) and, reduced to a quarter of its length, this poem could be effective satire.

CHRISTOPHER LEVENSON.

Out of the Dark: Phœbe Hesketh. Selected by Richard Church (Heinemann, 8s. 6d.).

THESE fifty-two poems in Phœbe Hesketh's latest collection have a pervading faith—"where shadows fall behind the sun." There is always the *light*, even when the loved child, the sweet brother, has died. No agonies but rather an acceptance, if a sad one. The restraint of a higher will on the human tears. Yet there is nothing that says to the reader "Keep Out," nothing obscure; indeed the inclusion in the poet's heart and thoughts is immediate. For these deceptively simple lyrics are in some elusive way most personal, whether of landscape, philosophy or love. Our own frailties and strengths are mirrored.

Throughout the six sections there is a traditional constancy, a searching after and a faithful recording of truth. Here is no slight surfacing, but careful observation and accuracy. Miss Hesketh is at her best in the love poems. In *Four Aspects of Love* she is concerned with fundamentals in brief telling statements:

"They met and parted in despair
At life's unyielding plot.
Now duty done, fate grants them rare
Reprieve, but duty's lot
Has changed them so they do not care
Whether they meet or not."

Some poems, such as *The Lonely Heart* and *Passage of the Bee* have an ancient sorrow, with something beyond the word. Indeed, most of these poems have tenderness and charm. And more than a few owe their red life to the impetus of the exciting line, and are dream-making. What more can one ask of poetry?

MADGE HALES.

The Headlands : Howard Sergeant (Putnam, 7s. 6d.).

Counterparts : Roy Fuller (Verschoyle, 6s. 0d.).

Poems : Diana Witherby (Verschoyle, 6s. 0d.).

SOME poets are born great and some achieve greatness by devious means, but there are others so continually ignored by the literary journalists of the Sunday (Highbrow) Press and the more influential weeklies that any potentialities towards greatness they may possess wither and die, unless backed by a vast reserve of determination. It is no longer true to say that the good poet can always find a publisher; it is even less true to say that he will always obtain recognition. Mr. Howard Sergeant's poetry has appeared in all parts of the British Commonwealth and in the United States, as well as in his own country, and his work has been included in both British and American anthologies. Yet his name is apparently unknown to the back-scratching pundits of Fleet Street, Tudor Street, Gray's Inn Road and all points west.

Publishing difficulties have delayed the appearance of *The Headlands* by several months, but it proves to be worth the waiting. The book contains the best poetry Mr. Sergeant has written to date and points to a potentiality for greatness that demands encouragement. The poet's strength is in his command of form and in his ability to make each poem a complete and coherent statement. There is literally not one bad poem in the book, and *The Leaves of Europe*, a sequence dedicated to the children of Europe, contains some of the most moving poetry on a tragic theme to appear since the end of the war. This collection should place Howard Sergeant among the six best minor poets of his generation.

The poetry in Mr. Roy Fuller's new book is disappointing in its failure to develop the talent that was so clearly discernible in his earlier work. Against the excellence of *Ten Memorial Poems*, *Rhetoric of a Journey* and *Youth Revisited* stands the vulgar banality of

"A strange dog trots into the drive, sniffs, turns
And pees against the mudguard of my car.
I see this through the window, past *The Times*,
And drop my toast and impotently glare."

and the essential triviality of *Signs* and *The Image*. He fails dismally to produce satirical verse after the manner of the early MacNeice and one suspects Mr. Fuller's employment of this device to be a defence against the sentimentality lurking behind the façade of the better poems in the book. It is sad to have to record the passing of yet another poet of great promise.

Miss Witherby is able to encompass the striking image, and she is striving desperately to avoid the appearance of triviality. Poems like *Institution Child*, *The Great Industrialist*, *Casualty*, and *Childhood and Age* are beautifully composed, but they make no lasting impact on the senses. It is only when writing about nature that she achieves a true marriage of thought and feeling. This is her first collection and there is every reason to look forward to her next book with confidence.

B. EVAN OWEN.

Selected Poems: T. S. Eliot (Faber, 7s. 6d.).

The First Morning: Peter Viereck (Scribner's, U.S.A., 18s.).

Dr. Viereck is on target at least once, when he says

"What cults he slew, his cult begot . . .
That 1912 was long ago.
Today the women come and go
Talking of T. S. Eliot."

Yet, because more and more women talk of T. S. Eliot, is that a valid reason for considering him superseded? And are we to allow credence to those American reviewers who speak of Dr. Viereck's "break with the Eliot-dominated past" and who dare to suggest him as one who may "succeed T. S. Eliot as *arbiter elegantiarum*"? The answer to these questions can be left to readers of these two volumes.

Eliot now is an established quarry of quotations. The etherised patient, the soft October night, the pair of ragged claws, the winter evening, Pipit, Sweeney, Burbank & Bleistein, the Hippopotamus, the three white leopards and all the rest are a part of the English-spoken culture, including Dr. Viereck's. Whether Dr. Viereck himself can become so vital an echo over so much of the world, time will show. In the interim, American adulation seems overdone.

His sensitive smoothness is from Tennyson and Housman, though his ear is not as good as either. His rustic simplicity is from Robert Frost. His *Irreverences* are Poundish. His lyricism is cancelled by his grotesqueries. His anger is neutralised by his tenderness. He looks too many ways, with too many attitudes. As soon as one is prepared to accept his outlook, it is changed. There is little point in his laughing at Kilmer's *Trees* when he himself can write:

“What is awakesness?
Is it a thing? Does knowing mean I own it?”

There's no point at all in his laughing at anyone, when he can put into cold print such lines as :

“Say yes to the breezes.
If any dishevels
One curl of a ringlet
I'll know and be with you.”

If this is a “break with the Eliot-dominated past,” it is high time we looked longer toward the author of :

“I was neither
Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,
Looking into the heart of light, the silence.”

Dr. Viereck is not as stupid as the two short quotations above might suggest. He has accomplishment, even achievement: he has wit and skill and serious application and background and a strong sense of values. He will try anything, and mean it. His talent is not in question, nor his sincerity. But, successor to Eliot, no.

The *Selected Poems* provides the common reader with the best of Mr. Eliot, except for *The Family Reunion*, extracts from which would have been more cogent than the doubtful Anglo-Betjermanism of *The Rock*.

It is not generally true that a creative artist continues to “develop,” to “deepen” his experience. Apart from the unpredictable one here and there through the centuries, poets and musicians, particularly, either die conveniently young or produce too much. There is only one Beethoven: on a lower plane, there is only one Yeats. The best work of Mr. Eliot was done by 1930, and most of it is contained in this present volume, a more permanent edition of the selection originally published as a Penguin. As for *The Family Reunion*, that play of wonderful subtlety (the *Four Quartets* are all summarised somewhere within those rich pages), alas! it led on to the other dreary make-believe about Middle Class characters moving on Edwardian stages. The vital Eliot essence is preserved in the *Selected Poems*.

HUGH CREIGHTON HILL.

Audition : Charles Duranty (Guild Press, Chesterfield, 2s. 0d.).
A Year to Come : Edward Storey (Guild Press, Chesterfield, 2s. 0d.).
The Fall of Paethon : Derek Parker (Zebra Poets, Bristol, 1s. 0d.).
First Offence : W. Price Turner (Zebra Poets, Bristol, 1s. 0d.).
The Universal Theorem : Hugh Creighton Hill (Heron Press, Liverpool, 1s. 6d.).
Travellers Alone : Alan Brownjohn (Heron Press, Liverpool, 1s. 6d.).

AUDITION by Mr. Charles Duranty and *A Year to Come* by Mr. Edward Storey are the first two booklets to appear in the new series published by The Guild Press and edited by Mr. John Hoffman. Mr. Duranty is the more mature in thought and more polished in technique. Having had several years start on Mr. Storey, he has had time to experiment and to make progress towards the development of an individual style. Mr. Storey is, as yet, pre-occupied with sound values rather than ideas. He betrays his devotion to the poetry of Dylan Thomas by his fondness for hyphenated constructions such as "world's-wise-way" and "day-done-sun" and particularly by his poem, *Death and Transfiguration*; but his feeling for words and imagery will stand him in good stead in the future.

Though duplicated (with a printed cover), the Zebra Poets booklets issued by Mr. Derek Maggs are well produced. In *The Fall of Paethon* Mr. Derek Parker adopts a casual style which, when it comes off—as it does in *Journey at Epiphany* and *Bath*—is admirably suited to his purpose, but many of his pieces lack poetic tension. Characteristically, Mr. W. Price Turner entitles his collection *First Offence*, but I suspect that he is holding back his forces for a more indictable act that will make this preliminary effort look like a mere smash-and-grab raid by comparison, for some of the best poems he has had published are not included. Nevertheless, if somewhat uneven, *First Offence* is an exciting collection, demonstrating the author's original cast of mind and virile use of language. It has an attractive variety of subject and mood, too—in these sixteen poems Mr. Turner ranges from lyrical to philosophical, from ironical to compassionate, and from toughness to tenderness. Underlying his work there is almost always present a keen sense of humour which keeps his feet firmly on the ground whenever his imagination threatens to carry him away.

The booklets from The Heron Press are published as Nos. 4 and 5 of the Artisan magazine series, yet each is devoted to the work

of a single poet. Mr. Creighton Hill deserves a wider public, for he has a style distinctly his own. It is obvious that he has studied his Pound and his Eliot, but both influences have been thoroughly assimilated and merged with own self-mocking attitude to life. As the individual titles indicate (i.e., *Triangle in Love*, *Triangle in Space-Time*, etc.), the nine poems of *The Universal Theorem* are all concerned with different aspects of the triangular conflict between man's emotions, intellect and spirit, and the search for a unifying element. The form of each is determined by the poem itself (very successfully, one might add). It is to be hoped that Mr. Creighton Hill will be able to follow this booklet up with a larger collection, for he has something definite to say and the verbal equipment to say it. In his sense of discipline and his careful craftsmanship, Mr. Alan Brownjohn appears to have something in common with the "neo-Empsonians" we hear so much about these days, but the resemblance is a superficial one. Certainly *his* poems never fall into the category of the Literary Exercise. Nor does he assume any of the "tough boy" poses. Quietly spoken, intelligent and demanding an intelligent response, he is the most assured in manner and approach of all the poets mentioned here. He is particularly skilful in exploring and defining subtle relationships and emotions which most poets avoid if only because they are so difficult to communicate with precision.

A. P. COURTLAND.

Moral Stories : David Wright (Verschoyle, 6s. 0d.).

Mr. David Wright's second volume, *Moral Stories*, begins with a group of *Seven South African Poems* in which the poet recalls his childhood, his family, the landscapes and legends that fascinated him as a child, and the quasi-mythological exploits of native chiefs, explorers and pioneers. It is distinctly noticeable that his vocabulary has been pruned of the rich verbosity and literary tone of his earlier work, and that he has worked through the influences of Hopkins and Dylan Thomas to develop a natural and highly effective language of his own. *Elegy*, *Images for a Fourth Septenary*, *On Himself* and *An Apology to the Dead* are also concerned with his own life and ancestry, and one gains the impression that in writing these personal poems, mentally tracing back his steps to their beginnings, so to speak, he has obtained a release from the brooding sense of isolation which dominated his first volume, and achieved a new freedom of thought and speech in doing so :

"My half-blind friend, whom solitary as a crane I first saw
 awkwardly run
 On pavements out of his element, as if behind his skyscraper
 back there shone
 Glances of Eumenides invisible to everyone but to him; whom
 I have seen take
 Real flight on wings that in the sky seem easy and slack. . . ."
 (To John Heath-Stubbs)

A number of the poems in this volume fall into quite another category, that of bitter satire directed against a society in which only the established poet has a place, and that strictly a nominal one. The ironic *A Visit to a Poet* ("justly imprisoned for injuring the State / By not joining the Army"), *The Poet Discovers Himself to be Infested with Lice*, the *Moral Stories*, *A Voyage to Cythera*, *On the Death of an Emperor Penguin*, and *A Funeral Oration* all belong to this group, which contains some of the best satire written since the War.

HOWARD SERGEANT.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND POETRY CIRCLE

Readings of new poems by their authors are a special feature of the gatherings held by the Contemporary Music and Poetry Circle on the second Monday of every month from October to May at Stanton Coit House, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, Kensington High Street, W.8. Tea 6.15 p.m. for 7 p.m. programme. Open to the public. Collection. Enquiries: Alec Craig, 5 Avenue House, Belsize Park Gardens, N.W.3.

Reprints of separate poems, if ordered within 14 days, can be supplied by arrangement with the Editor.